

Mr. Speaker, to pay for this huge expansion in socialized medicine.

□ 1015

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE FOR SENIORS IN NEED

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, it is time to revise and reform Medicare. It is time to move us away from a government oriented, a Soviet model of socialism approach to health care for our senior citizens. We need a program that is light, a program that is solid, a program that is efficient, not one that is heavy with burdensome bureaucratic red tape.

We need to have a prescription drug benefit. We need to have one that does not just blanket us all with a brand new entitlement, one that does not necessarily worry about Ross Perots or some retiree from General Motors who already is getting it anyhow. But we need to help the widow out there who is choosing between tamoxifen for her breast cancer and rent for her home.

We want to help people stay independent. In 1965, when Medicare was conceived, the miracle drugs that are available to our seniors were not out there. They were not foreseen. Now we have drugs that enhance our life-style, that make us live longer and healthier and in less pain, and Medicare needs to adjust to this. That is what this bill is about that we will be voting on this week.

I am confident that we can take the best ideas of Democrat Party, the Republican Party, the Independents and move it out of this body, combine it with those in the other body and come up with a plan that is best for our seniors.

REMEMBERING ROBERT LEE STUMP

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Lee Stump, former Congressman from Arizona and past chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services and Committee on Veterans' Affairs who died on Friday.

First elected to Congress as a Democrat, he became a Republican after Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency in 1981. It was truly an honor to serve as a member by me on the Committee on Armed Services under Chairman Stump's leadership. He was a man dedicated to the protection of the American people and peace in the world through a powerful military.

Bob Stump knew the only way to keep our forces strong was to take care of the soldier and his family both dur-

ing service and retirement. He served in the Navy during World War II as a combat medic on Luzon, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

America has lost a great man and a true patriot, one of the finest statesman Arizona has ever produced. In conclusion, God bless our troops.

SENSIBLE MEDICARE REFORMS

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, as Congress this week considers the largest expansion of Medicare in 35 years, we should begin with the understanding that Medicare has actually cost the American taxpayers 7½ times in real dollars what it was projected to cost. And while the needs for some prescription drug for some seniors is very, very real, it is important also to recall that 76 percent of seniors in America today have prescription drug coverage.

I would offer that our reforms this week should be about focusing solutions at the point of the need. Let us help our seniors near the poverty level with urgent and sufficient prescription drug coverage. Let us reform Medicare so it will be there for the future without placing an undue burden on our children and grandchildren. Let us otherwise do no harm to the private sector foundation of the greatest health care system in the history of the world.

For all these reasons I will oppose a universal drug benefit in Medicare. By agreeing to a prescription drug benefit for all seniors rather than just those in need, Congress threatens our Nation's fiscal stability, our own private prescription plans, and the survival of our free market health care system.

One more massive Federal entitlement is, simply put, a prescription for disaster.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or yeas or nays are ordered, or on which the voted is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCACY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1772) to improve small business advocacy, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. R. 1772

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Small Business Advocacy Improvement Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Excessive regulations continue to burden the Nation's small businesses.

(2) Federal agencies continue to propose regulations that impose disproportionate burdens on small businesses.

(3) An independent office of small business advocacy will help to ensure that Federal agencies are responsive to small businesses and that those agencies comply with their statutory obligations with respect to small businesses.

(4) The independence of an office that acts as an advocate for small businesses is essential to ensure that it can serve as an effective advocate without being restricted by the views or policies of the Small Business Administration or any other Federal executive branch agency.

(5) To be effective an office that acts as an advocate for small businesses needs sufficient resources to conduct creditable economic studies and research which are necessary for the maintenance of small business databases and for the accurate assessment of the impact of regulations on small businesses, the role of small business in the Nation's economy, and the barriers to the growth of small businesses.

(6) The research, information, and expertise provided by an independent office of small business advocacy will be a valuable source of information and advice for Congress and Federal agencies with which the office will work on behalf of small businesses.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to ensure that there exists an entity that has the statutory independence and adequate financial resources to effectively advocate for and on behalf of small business;

(2) to require that such an entity report to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate, and to the Administrator of the Small Business Administration in order to keep them fully and currently informed about issues and regulations affecting small business concerns and the necessity for corrective action by the regulatory agency or Congress;

(3) to provide a separate authorization for appropriations for such an entity; and

(4) to strengthen the role of the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman by ensuring continued cooperation between the Ombudsman and the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

SEC. 3. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF COUNSEL OF ADVOCACY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 201 of Public Law 94-305 (15 U.S.C. 634a) is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a)" before "There is established";

(2) by striking the second sentence; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) The management of the Office shall be vested in a Chief Counsel for Advocacy who shall be appointed from civilian life by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and who should be appointed without regard to political affiliation and on the basis of fitness to perform the duties of the office.

"(c) No individual may be appointed under subsection (b) if such individual has served as an officer or employee of the Small Business Administration during the 5-year period